Apple Hill ripe with tradition



Apple Hill in El Dorado County is a bevy of activity this time of year. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

CAMINO – Johnny Appleseed may have planted roots in the Ohio Valley, but his memory is alive and well in El Dorado County.

The agricultural region that spans from Placerville to Pollock Pines has become the toast of the town this fall with its signature Apple Hill Growers Association harvest. The area boasts 50 ranches, including Christmas tree growers, vineyards, a microbrewery and spa. Johnny's reported bare feet would have slipped nicely into the California spa lifestyle as well as his supposed conservation nature to maintain the apple trees he planted for 49 years before dying in 1845.

John Chapman was born in Massachusetts on Sept. 26, which has turned out to be reason alone to have a fall festival for apple growers like those in El Dorado County.

Tour buses, shuttles and a long line of vehicles descended on the area last weekend. The seasonal event boasts Trick or Treat Days on the last weekend of the month; with November bringing a Harvest Run at ParaVi (formerly Primus Vineyards) on the first and a holiday pie tasting on Nov. 14.

If you're seeking an eating experience, this is the place to be. Apple pies, crisps, syrup, turnovers, cider and the candied version can be found alongside fudge, berry cobbler and pumpkin roll pastries. Some of the orchards serve more conventional lunch food.

At Rainbow Orchards, the farm off Larson Drive, even serves a small Braeburn apple with your burger and chips. These people take their apples seriously. Visitors are invited to watch the cider bottling operation in the back as they're ordering pie or other culinary delights. You can buy unpasteurized jugs of apple cider. In summer, the place hosts the likes of Elvin Bishop and others during their concert series.

But it's the food most people show up for. Worker Karen Carrero had a hazy gleam in her eye when she described the apple syrup over vanilla ice cream.

"It's killer," she said.

On a busy Saturday, their grounds are more low-key when compared to the festival atmosphere of Abel's Apple Acres – the latter crowded with children wanting to ride ponies and meander through a hay maze more than anything else.

There's something for everyone on the scenic drive through rolling hills, open meadows, ridge-tops and country roads. Kae was after apples because she's the blue ribbon champ (El Dorado County Fair) of pie making. The Ench family of Smokey Ridge Ranch off Carson Road delivered.

I'll be the judge of whether the pie she says she's going make measures up since she's never used Rhode Island Greening or

Braeburn apples before.

Smokey Ridge – named after the family's farm mule – is all about apple tasting when you belly up to the apple bar of sorts. Wendy West, aka Mom, obliged anyone wanting to listen and try a honest-to-goodness spectrum of apples from sweet to tart off the 15-acre farm of 85 years. She started us out with the Mutsu and Fuji and ended with the Rhode Island Greening.

While we were standing there, a visitor asked about the Arkansas Black known for its smokiness. Their harvest is a couple weeks out. I stood there dumbfounded. Who knew there were so many types of apples?

The fun-filled day was kicked-off by Boeger Winery's kick-butt Barbera for red wine lovers and roll-off-your-tongue Pinot Gris for white fans, which is a short distance from Smokey Ridge.

Cider rules

But maybe I should know more about apples. After all, the roots of my family are embedded in this fruit. Both my grandfathers made hard cider, which is essentially the fermentation of the apples to a 3 to 8.5 percent alcohol. If you add brown sugar or honey to the process, the alcohol is boosted.

My Mom, who called it "the poor man's alcohol," remembers how her father would take his apples to the cider mill and have the apples pressed. He'd let the liquid sit in barrels to ferment for a few weeks to make the alcohol ripe. It's no wonder they had company in the fall. When she discovered I was going to the Apple Hill event, she told me to find an apple press.

The closest I got to any equipment was an industrial-sized apple peeler that looked capable of pumping enough apples for a million pies.

Oh, the wonders of the Internet. I found out one can buy a complete kit of 27 items to make hard apple cider, which is supposedly making a comeback. Add yeast, sugar and apples, you're well on your way.

To find out everything that is going on at Apple Hill, go to www.applehill.com. El Dorado Transit's last free weekend Apple Hill Shuttle is Oct. 24- 25 from 10am to 5pm. For more information on the Apple Hill shuttle, call (530) 642.5383 or go to www.eldoradotransit.com.

Susan Wood is a freelance writer based in South Lake Tahoe. She may reached at copysue1@yahoo.com.

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Nevada Day is a 4-day event

Nevada Day, the celebration of the Silver State's admission to the Union, is a four-day (Oct. 29-Nov. 1) extravaganza complete with a parade, carnival and beard contest in Carson City.

This year's theme, Nevada Salutes President Lincoln, celebrates Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday and his push to grant Nevada's statehood.

The 36th state was admitted to the Union on Oct. 31, 1864.

Activities include:

Oct. 29:

RSVP Carnival, in its 24th consecutive year, provides carnival rides for adults and small children at Mills Park in Carson

City. The RSVP Carnival will open at 4pm Thursday and noon, Oct. 30-Nov. 1. Admission is free, with a fee for rides.

Oct. 30:

Folkabilly group Antsy McClain & The Trailer Park Troubadours will perform at the Brewery Arts Center, Oct. 30-31 at 7:30pm. Tickets are $23 for adults and $20 for students, seniors and members.

Oct. 31:

Pancake Breakfasts are available for two worthy causes. The Builder's Association of Western Nevada features a feast to benefit the Women in Business scholarship and the â€œHelping Hands program for $6 at Red's Old 395 Grill from 7-10am. Children under 6 are free. Call (775) 882.4353. The Carson City Republican Women pancake breakfast at the Governor's Mansion from 7-9:30am gives residents a chance to meet political representatives prior to the parade. Adults are $6 and children under 10 are $3. Proceeds benefit the Carson City High School scholarship fund. Call (775) 884.3011.

20th Annual Carson Nugget Nevada Day Classic Run/Walk will feature hundreds of runners and walkers in Carson City's historical downtown district. The event includes an 8K run at 8:15am, a two-mile walk at 8:25am and a 2-mile fun run at 8:25am. Registration is $25. All races start from the corner of Telegraph and Curry streets. Proceeds benefit the Special Olympics. Call (775) 883.3361.

The Nevada State Railroad Museum, 2180 S. Carson St., is steaming up an 1888 locomotive for public rides from 10am-4pm. Admission is $5 for adults; $4 for seniors 65 and older; $3 for children six to 11; and free for children under 6.

An Air Show to kick off the Nevada Day Parade includes all types of aircraft, including an 8am hot-air balloon launch, followed by a flyover with F-18 Hornets, an F-16 Falcon from

Fallon Naval Air Station and C-130 Hercules from the Nevada Air Guard. Parade festivities include marching bands, floats, equestrian groups and historical displays. The parade starts at 10am from William and Carson streets and ends near Stewart and Carson streets. Call (775) 882.2600.

RE/MAX Nevada Day Balloon Launch offers hot-air balloon rides above the parade route for $200 and benefit Nevada Day Inc. Tethered rides in Mills Park on Sunday from 7-11am supporting the Children's Miracle Network are $5. Sponsorships are available: $300 for two passengers. Sign up by calling (775) 844.1000.

Free admission to the Nevada State Museum, 8:30am to 4:30pm.

A Nevada Day Battle of the Bands will highlight high school marching bands at the Carson City High School field at 3pm. Awards will be given for best overall parade and field with the winners receiving the Governor's Grand Champion Trophy.

The Mad Hatter Ball is a dance for all ages from 8:30-10pm at the Children's Museum of Northern Nevada. Adults tickets are $10 and kids under 16 are free with an adult; otherwise kids are $4 each. Call (775) 830.7939.

The Annual Nevada Day Beard Contest on the steps of the State Capitol immediately follows the parade. Admission and contest entry are free, with winners awarded in the following categories: longest; fullest; reddest; whitest; blackest; best salt and pepper; best groomed; scruffiest; and most bearded community – Carson City's title for two years running.

The 34th Annual World Championship Single Jack Drilling Contest is set for 11:05am at the Carson Nugget west parking lot. Contestants have 10 minutes to drill the deepest hole in Sierra White Granite using 4.5 pound hammers and bits of graduated steel. The contest celebrates the heritage of the Comstock mining days when blast holes for dynamite were punched into ore bodies by hand. Entry fee is $50. Admission

is free.

Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki will host the 27th Annual Chili Feed at the Carson Nugget's upstairs Banquet Center, from noon-2pm. This free event is an opportunity to meet state and local government leaders. To further the tradition of hospitality, the Governor's Mansion, 606 N. Mountain St., will be open for tours from noon-4pm.

The 10th Annual Silver State Rumble highlighting live amateur boxing and hosted by Bruno's Boxing Club, will take place at 3pm at the Carson City Community Center, 851 E. Williams St. There are 15 bouts scheduled and admission is $10 for adults; $8 for seniors, $5 for kids six-12 and kids under six are free. Call (775) 888.6806.

The Pinewood Derby Race from 1-5pm in the Main Hall of the Carson Mall. Registration is free and begins at 11am. Kits are $4 and can be purchased at any American Family Insurance site. All ages are welcome.

For more information on all Nevada Day events, log onto www.NevadaDay.com or call the Carson City Convention and Visitors Bureau at 800-NEVADA-1.

Aldana – Tallac was a choice, not a mandate



Karina Aldana

By Karina Aldana

During the time that I attended South Tahoe High School I was your average student. I didnâ€™t care much about school, I just went, did what I had to do, then went home. My grades were decent, but not all that great. I have never been on probation nor was I ever credit deficient. I am not a mom and I was not kicked out of school, and I am a Mount Tallac student.

I *chose* to come to Tallac because Tallac works for me, as it does for many other students as well. I can work independently and at my own pace, but get help when I need it. Ever since I've been at Tallac I have discovered so much about myself; whether it be from my passion for art to realizing how much potential I truly have. Because here at Tallac they give us a chance. They donâ€™t give up on us the second we mess up. They keep pushing until we reach success.

As for the future, I plan on attending the community college after I graduate. But I do not know where I will be five years from now because things change. What I want now may not be what I want in a year or two. I can only hope. Hope to be graduating from and art institute and hope to be pursuing my dream job. But no matter what I end up wanting to do or not do, I know I have the support of my teachers, my classmates, my counselor and my principal.

Karina Aldana is a senior at Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

SLT Parks and Rec kid fun



South Lake Tahoe Parks and Recreation Department schedule; more info at (530) 542-0275 or www.recreationintahoe.com.

Gym Time For Tots Monday 11-12:30 $2, throuhg April 26, 2010. Gym Time For Tots will be closed all LTUSD holidays and snow days.

Kids Nite Out Oct 23 (Swimming) 6:30-10pm. Cost $14 for activity, pizza dinner and a G or PG movie. Preschool Potty Trained (must sign up at least one day in advance)-8th Grade

Kids Club Minimum Day Activities noon-6:30pm this week; $10 per day covers activity and snack (Pre Registration Required); Wed-Ice Skating, Thurs-Make a Candy Apple and Fri-Swimming.

Skating and Hockey School Sign-ups. The South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena is offering Skate School and Hockey School sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. For those youth with some hockey experience we are hosting a combination â€œYouth Skills and Scrimmageâ€ drop in hockey program on Monday evenings. If you just want to knock a puck around on your own we also offer Stick Times three days a week. We offer free full loaner protective hockey equipment for all session sign ups. As the weather turns cooler, this fall is a great opportunity for those of all ages to discover the joy of ice sports. Ice sports are great life-long activities that can be enjoyed day or night, regardless of weather. For more information come by the arena at 1176 Rufus Allen Blvd., or call (530) 542-6262.

SLT city attorney may keep her job



Jacqueline Mittelstadt

By Kathryn Reed

Jacqueline Mittelstadt's resume does not need updating – at least for two weeks.

The South Lake Tahoe City Council in a series of open and closed sessions that were interrupted by several breaks finally told the nearly full house at 2:58pm Tuesday that the whole matter had been continued to Nov. 3.

Ironically, that is Election Day. Fortunately for these five, none of their names is on the ballot. But people are keeping an eye on what's going on, with possible ramifications next year when Councilmembers Jerry Birdwell, Kathay Lovell and Bill Crawford's terms expire.

Clearly, negotiations between the city and Mittelstadt are under way – something that has not happened in six weeks. It's unknown if the outcome will result in a buyout, reorganization in the city attorney's office or some other resolution.

Mittelstadt continues to be on paid administrative leave, making $10,000/month. It's the taxpayers of South Lake Tahoe who are paying for her to sit at home and do nothing, all at the direction of the City Council on Sept. 8

Later Tuesday in another closed session the council postponed discussing City Manager Dave Jinkens' role as it relates to his handling of personnel matters.

Mittelstadt and Jinkens' futures seem to be intertwined. What was predicted to occur Tuesday with the city attorney losing her job and Jinkens' being secure might take a 180-degree turn next month.

However, Councilmen Hal Cole and Bruce Grego don't see it that way.

"I don't see a nexus between the two, but maybe I'm naive," Cole said Tuesday night.

Grego said the perception of the two being linked is because "some on the council who have strong feelings about the city manager."

Before Tuesday's meeting Cole said clarity would come out of the hearing. But the change in tactics by the council when members realized Mittelstadt's case was stronger than they'd realized, proved clarity would remain elusive.

If Mittelstadt retains her position, one she has had since June, it's possible the public will never know why Councilmembers Cole, Grego and Lovell voted to begin the dismissal hearings.

"I don't agree with a lot that has been said," Grego told *Lake Tahoe News* late Tuesday in regards what the media is reporting. "I can't be specific." He feels stymied by not being able to speak about litigation and personnel issues.

It's possible Grego may find himself in the hot seat. Those in

legal circles have said the California Bar Association should be notified about Grego's "unprofessional" conduct at Tuesday's meeting when he told Mittelstadt's attorney, "I object to your presence" as well as his reportedly more egregious and unethical role in negotiating a quid pro quo between Mittelstadt and Jinkens.

Grego objected to Mittelstadt's attorney, Tim Brictson of Brictson & Cohn of San Diego, representing her because he wrote a couple briefs for the council this summer in regards to the ATM case. His firm was hired because neither Mittelstadt nor Patrick Enright, the other city attorney hired at the same time as Mittelstadt, has experience in federal court. His contract expired before he started representing Mittelstadt.

Grego's outburst and beliefs were quickly dismissed, including by Birdwell, who is a former judge.

The other issue involving Grego has to do with Jinkens allegedly saying he would make the Aug. 10 complaint filed by Finance Director Christine Vuletich against Mittelstadt and Enright go away if the city attorney would ensure Vuletich continued to report to him and not have it changed so the council is her boss.

Grego is adamant he was not a party to any quid pro quo actions, even though he had to have the phrase explained to him.

"That's absolute fantasy that somehow I was negotiating … that I would trade one issue for another. Whoever said it doesn't know what they are saying or they are lying," Grego said.

Mittelstadt was not available for comment after the meeting, nor was her attorney.

If one were keeping score on Oct. 20, it would appear the council and their attorney, Dick Whitmore of Liebert Cassidy

Whitmore of San Francisco, lost round one.

This is based on previous comments by councilmembers to *Lake Tahoe News* that everything would be resolved at this meeting and the pubic would understand. The public is no more enlightened about what is going on at city hall than it was at the start of the day.

The council says it wants transparency, but just the opposite is occurring. Without full disclosure of what is going on, the public is starting to call the whole affair a "cover-up" – and wonder what it is the council has to hide.

Nearly a ton of trash collected at Sierra



It wasn't a paid event, but some still cashed in. Photo/Sierra-at-Tahoe

Sierra-at-Tahoe trash picker uppers came away with 1,876 pounds of rubbish during the second annual Keep Sierra Clean day this month.

Not just traditional garbage is hauled off the slopes of the Echo Summit resort. The hundreds of people who volunteered their time Oct. 11 found money, ski equipment, recyclables and more. Some people went up chairlifts, while others focused in stream zones.

The resort just missed its goal to collect 2,000 pounds of trash. But it did beat last yearâ€™s mark of 1,820 pounds.

Support for LTCC incumbents

Dear Publisher,

As directors at Lake Tahoe Community College, we strongly support the incumbents (Roberta Mason, Kerry David, and Molly Blann) in the upcoming Board of Trustees election. Over the last eighteen months, the community college system has been cut by $840 million below the voter-approved funding levels. These are the largest cuts ever seen by community colleges, and they are unfortunately being imposed upon us at a time of record enrollment. We are confident that the Board incumbents seeking reelection possess the knowledge, skills, and determination to navigate our college through what may well be the worst budgetary situation in Californiaâ€™s history.

These three Trustees have consistently demonstrated their commitment to ensuring that our students receive a stellar education and they are well known for their extremely high ethical standards and willingness to make difficult decisions during trying economic times. Their combined Board experience of over 56 years indicates that they have a deep understanding of the complexities of our educational system. We are proud to be associated with professionals of the caliber of Mrs. Mason, Mr. David, and Mrs. Blann.

Virginia Boyar, PhD â€“ Director of Career & Technical Education

Craig Brinkman, MBA â€“ Title III Director

Julie Cathie â€“ Director of Financial Aid

Melonie Guttry â€“ Foundation Executive Director

Bill King â€“ Director of Computer Services

Marc Sabella, CPA â€“ Director of Fiscal Services

Michelle Sower, MS â€“ Child Development Center Director

Susan Walter, MBA, SPHR â€“ Director of Human Resources

Ex-parks commissioner against Measure B

By Jerome Evans

Measure B on the November 3rd ballot is no more and no less than a raid on the Measure S funds that were voted by the people of South Lake Tahoe nine years ago. A stealth raid, it may be said.

It would add Little League play fields to projects eligible for funding from Measure S revenues. And not only the projects themselves but also their maintenance, without limit in time or amount.

Proponents of Measure B have said that there is no opposition to what they propose. I assure you that there is opposition in this community, very substantial opposition. That opposition

comes not only from members of the Bicycle Coalition but also from residents of our community, young and old, who enjoy cycling to work and to play, and who understand the importance of extensive and well maintained bike trails to visitors, young and old.

Proponents of Measure B have said that the measure has been approved by this council, the board of supervisors, and the Community Facilities District Recreation Joint Powers Authority (JPA). It was the JPA, a three-member body (one council member, the District 5 supervisor, and a representative of the Paradise Park board) responsible for administering Measure S funds, that put this measure on the ballot. It has not been endorsed by the Board of Supervisors and has only now come before this council. And it did not go to your Parks and Recreation Commission for its consideration.

Proponents of Measure B contend that there is a large pot of money generated by Measure S that ought to be tapped for another purpose inasmuch as it is unclear when additional bike trails will be constructed and need maintenance funds. They ignore the fact that planning for the Greenway project, which will provide a long-dreamed-of bike trail connection between Stateline and Meyers, continues, as does planning for bike trails as an important component of the Lakeside Commons project. No one can be sure when funding for these two major projects will be forthcoming, but it is clear that assurance of funding for their continuing maintenance will be essential to their receiving state support.

Assurances by the proponents, and stated in the ballot argument, that this would be a â€œtemporaryâ€ diversion of funds are belied by the wording of Measure B itself.

Proponents of Measure B argue that Measure S promised four new playfields and a practice field but produced only a single playfield. They choose to ignore the fact that our community now has two new playfields surfaced with artificial turf which

gives them the capacity, according to Steve Weiss and others, of four grass fields each. They also ignore the fact that the provision of these two fields has greatly reduced wear and tear on the Little League fields on Rufus Allen Boulevard, a fact that has been evident since the first field was completed.

Proponents of Measure B failed to consult with the Bicycle Coalition, which, with Ty Polastriâ€™s leadership, has done so much toward making South Lake Tahoe a â€œBicycle Friendly Communityâ€ (city web site), while they were formulating their proposal. Thus they failed to seize an opportunity to meet and discuss a mutually agreeable result. This despite the fact that many agree that existing bike trails are greatly in need of repair.

Finally, in their haste to move their proposal past the voters, the proponents have failed, as yet, to produce a concrete plan for their project, anything resembling an environmental impact statement, or details as to actual costs of their proposal. One might think that they would have learned something from the recent experience of the Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Again, Measure B is simply a raid on Measure S funds, a stealth raid, that should be rejected by this council and the voters. Let the proponents go back to the start, if they wish, put together a solid plan, engage the community, and then give it another try.

That, I believe, is the way we do the publicâ€™s business in this community– or it should be.

Jerome Evans has been active in the South Lake Tahoe community; he also a former member of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission.

Homewood’s Pisano’s goes up in flames

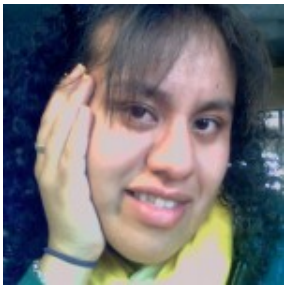
The cause of the Monday night blaze that destroyed Homewoodâ€™s Pisanoâ€™s Pizza is being investigated by the North Tahoe Fire Protection District and Placer County sheriffâ€™s deputies.

Dave Zaski, spokesman for the fire district, would not tell *Lake Tahoe News* if the sheriffâ€™s department involvement is because of suspected arson.

Officials are expected to release more information at the end of the week.

The poplar eatery on Highway 89 sustained substantial damage, though Zaski didnâ€™t know if it would be ruled a total loss, nor did he have an estimate of the dollar amount of the damage.

HOPE – all about helping LTCC students



Ana Guzman

By **Ana Guzman**

Hispanos Orgullosos Preparandose para la Excelencia, HOPE, is a club at Lake Tahoe Community College. Arturo Rangel is the Outreach Technician at LTCC and also the advisor for HOPE.

This club is based on the financial necessities of AB540 students, who for legal reasons are not able to apply for federal financial aid.

HOPE has awarded a total of $1,170 in scholarships.

HOPE meets twice a month. Meetings involve planning fundraisers, such as a Halloween Dance for high school students. During this fall quarter the priorities of HOPE are the Lake Tahoe Youth Commission and fundraisers.

We are very thankful for the local businesses that support us and for the people in the community who attend our events. We believe that HOPE will help more students, not only financially, but also creating a support system. Everyone enrolled at LTCC is welcome to join.

Ana Guzman is president of HOPE. She may be reached at guzmananalilia@gmail.com.